

**BOROUGH OF ROCKY HILL
COUNCIL MINUTES
MAY 15, 2006**

The regular meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Rocky Hill was called to order by Mayor George Morren at 7:33 PM. Mayor Morren led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag followed by a moment of silent meditation. Mayor Morren stated that the meeting has been properly advertised in the December 17, 2005, issue of the Somerset Messenger Gazette and is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Roll Call: Mr. Richard Batchelder-present, Mr. Brian Griner-present, Mr. Brad Merritt-present, Ms. Eileen Uhrik, Mr. Jared Witt-present, Mr. Edward Zimmerman-present.

Also present: Borough Clerk Raymond Whitlock, Borough Attorney Albert Cruz

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Minutes – May 1, 2006 - Motion to approve the minutes was made by Merritt with a second by Batchelder contingent upon correction of spelling to “Major Mahlmann”. Motion carried on roll call vote – all ayes; Witt-abstain.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The floor was opened to the public for comments/questions. Hearing none, the floor was closed to the public.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS/BILL LIST

Resolution

WHEREAS, the Treasurer has certified that sufficient funds are available to pay said vouchers, BE IT, THEREFORE, RESOLVED, that the following vouchers be approved for payment. Clerk Whitlock referenced the cost of the pedestrian signs noting that all of the signs were replaced this year due to wear, thus resulting in a higher than usual cost this year. Motion to approve the resolution was made by Batchelder with a second by Witt. Motion carried on roll call vote – all ayes. (See Appendix 1 for Bill List).

SPECIAL BUSINESS:

Resolution – First Reformed Church – Motion was made by Zimmerman with a second by Witt to approve the resolution of support of the First Reformed Church for continued faith and service to the community, thus celebrating their 150th anniversary and in its search for funding from private and public donors. Motion carried on roll call vote – all ayes. (Appendix 2)

Resolution – Approval of Special Items of Revenue and Appropriation – 2005 Youth Athletic and Recreation Grant in the sum of \$15,000 – Motion was made by Zimmerman with a second by Merritt for the approval of the resolution. Motion carried on roll call vote – all ayes. (Appendix 3).

Resolution – COAH Third Round Substantive Certification/Preparation of Housing Element and Fair Share Plan – Motion was made by Batchelder with a second by Merritt for the approval of the resolution and subsequent filing of the appropriate documentation to COAH by the Planner and Planning Board in accordance with the required submission date of 1/3/07. Motion carried on roll call vote – all ayes.

Memorial Day Activities – Councilmen Merritt and Batchelder will make contact with Mary Germain and Rev. Schutter to coordinate proper representation for the Memorial Day event due to the absence of Mayor Morren (the Mayor has historically been the master of ceremonies for this event). Motion was made by Merritt with a second by Batchelder for the continuance of the event as well as the ordering of a wreath for the ceremony by Clerk Whitlock for approximately \$100.00. Motion carried on roll call vote – all ayes.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Communications as listed on the agenda were discussed, disseminated and/or ordered filed.

- Copy of letter from DEP to Princeton Gamma Tech advising of the DEP’s intent to do extensive testing on the site was distributed by Mayor Morren.
- A draft contract between R. Conley, Architect and the Rocky Hill Fire Department was received. Councilman Griner will forward same to the Fire Department who are the responsible party for the signing of the contract.
- Letter was received from NJSP (Hamilton Station) advising that the Troop “C” from Kingwood NJ will be providing coverage to the Borough effective June 1, 2006.
- Correspondence was received from the NJ League of Municipalities objecting to Governor Corzine’s proposal to charge towns for State Police coverage.
- Copy of the drawings for the proposed signage for the Mary Jacobs Library was received and will be on file in the Clerk’s Office. Any required action by the governing body will be addressed after review by the Planning Board.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Discussion of Open Space Tax Proposal - Attorney Cruz advised that Auditor Morrison was consulted about the proposal and recommended that a dedicated .03 for the open space tax would be sufficient to fund the current Green Acres loan. After considerable discussion, it was a consensus that the dedication of .02 would be sufficient based on the impending Schafer Tract project. Attorney Cruz will prepare a resolution for same and provide copy to Auditor Morrison for his review so that action may be taken at the next Borough Council meeting.

Form of Indemnification of Public Employees - Attorney Cruz advised that he spoke with Insurance Agent Ted Merritt who advised that our coverage includes public officials' insurance. An indemnification policy could supplement the current coverage that we have and would cover the current deductible. Considerable discussion ensued regarding the allowable limits under the current policy and the scope of covered individuals. It was agreed to have Attorney Cruz review the policy further to clarify the parameters of the coverage for current as well as former council members while acting in an official capacity. It was also suggested that Attorney Cruz consult with the School Board for review of their policy.

NEW BUSINESS:

Rocky Hill Reformed Church – Request was received for the use of Panicaro Park on June 11, 2006, by the church. Also requested was approval for the closure of Reeve Rd. on Saturday, Sept. 30th from 5-8:00 PM in conjunction with their 150th anniversary celebration. Motion to approve these requests was made by Merritt with a second by Zimmerman. Motion carried on roll call vote – all ayes.

Water Cooler – Motion was made by Witt with a second by Zimmerman to remove the water cooler from the meeting room due to a problem with the installation of same and replace it with bottled water. Motion carried on roll call vote – all ayes.

Telephone Answering System – Motion was made by Witt with a second by Uhrick to authorize Councilman Batchelder to spend up to \$100 for the purchase of an answering machine for Borough Hall. This will serve as a temporary solution to the problem with the current one until Councilman Zimmerman is able to evaluate the use of a possibly donated system. Motion carried on roll call vote – all ayes.

Recreation Committee Requests – Councilman Zimmerman advised of the Recreation Committee's requests for expenditure of previously approved funds for various purchases and upcoming events in the Borough Hall Park. Councilman ~~Batchelder~~ Merritt advised of requests received from residents for more equipment and upcoming park night events to be held at Panicaro Park. Concern was expressed about the availability of restroom facilities and the suitability for having a band at Panicaro Park. Suggestions were made that an alternate means of providing music should be considered for the park nights; the possibility of having an ice cream truck made available for the public during the events should be considered; the purchase of additional equipment for Panicaro Park, i.e. tables, benches should be considered; events planned in observance of other holidays, i.e. Labor Day, etc. should also be considered. The requests will be related to the Recreation Committee by Councilman Zimmerman for consideration. The following action was taken on the requests made:

- Motion to approve the purchase of two picnic tables at \$500.00 each and three benches at \$159 each for the pavilion at Borough Hall was made by Zimmerman with a second by Witt. Motion carried on roll call vote – all ayes.
- Motion of approval was made by Zimmerman with a second by Griner for the expenditure of funds not to exceed \$800.00 for the tennis camp. Motion carried on roll call vote – all ayes.
- Motion of approval was made by Zimmerman with a second by Witt for the expenditure of funds up to \$500.00 for the maintenance/repair of cracks to the tennis courts. Motion carried on roll call vote – all ayes.
- Motion of approval was made by Zimmerman with a second by Witt for the expenditure of funds up to \$750.00 for music and ice cream for the July 4th celebration. Motion carried on roll call vote – all ayes.

Four park night events starting June 2nd were requested. Motion was made to approve the park night event for June 2nd and the expenditure of funds up to \$450.00 for same. Roll call: Batchelder-nay, Griner-aye, Merritt-nay, Uhrick-aye, Witt-aye, Zimmerman-aye. Motion carried. Approval of the other three requested park night events held over pending the Recreation Committee's review of the aforementioned concerns.

Water/Sewer Report – Councilman Merritt provided a summary of the April report as provided by Superintendent Larry Merk.

Liquor License Renewals – Clerk Whitlock advised that public hearings will be held at the next meeting for renewal of the licenses for the Rocky Hill Pub and Santa Fe Grille. The renewal of the Rocky Hill Pub license is contingent upon receipt of the required tax clearance certificate.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Peg Merritt, resident, suggested the use of an alternate means of music be considered due to the loudness of the band. Mrs. Merritt also suggested checking with the neighbors of the parks for any concerns relative to the noise from the park events.

Hearing no other comments/questions, the floor was closed.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 PM was made by Batchelder with a second by Zimmerman.
Motion carried on voice vote – all ayes.

Respectfully submitted:

Donna M. Griffiths
Deputy Clerk